Accurate gender-wise details of employment in the coffee plantations are not readily available. However, it is estimated that about 60% persons employed in the coffee plantations are women.

(c) The Government has been implementing various plan schemes and extending development and technical support for coffee development activities with special focus on planting and quality up-gradation (Value addition) in the non-traditional areas, such as Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and States of North East Region.

Adverse effect of duty free import of edible-oil from Nepal

†3683. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the loss of revenue due to duty free import of edible oil from Nepal;

(b) the number of vegetable oil/rapeseed oil units in the country in the year 2003-04 and the number of units, out of those, which have closed down during the past years;

(c) the reasons for closure of these oil/rapeseed oil units, and whether their condition deteriorated and they became sick due to import of oil from Nepal; and

(d) the scheme of the Government for revival of these units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) In the edible oil category, only vanaspati is imported from Nepal into India and its duty-free import is restricted to one lakh metric tones per year. Since this import is under the provision of India-Nepal Treaty of Trade, the question of revenue loss does not arise.

(b) Details of vanaspati units in the country, working and closed, are given below:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Year (Nov. to Oct.)	Working units/ functional units	Closed units	Total number of units
2003-04	157	94	251
2004-05	132	129	261
2005-06	116	148	264
2006-07 (up to 31.12.2006)	120	147	267

(c) The closure of large number of domestic units is on account of various factors, such as creation of production capacity not commensurate with availability of raw material, obsolete technology, poor economies of scale, shift in consumer preference towards soft oils, competition from duty-free import of vanaspati from Nepal and Sri Lanka. It cannot, therefore, be concluded that the domestic units have become sick due to import of oil from Nepal.

(d) Steps taken by the Government to improve the health of edible oil industry include:

1. Import of oilseeds/oils except copra/coconut oil has been allowed on Open General License (OGL).
2. Import duty on certain vegeable oils of edible grade intended for manufacture of refined oil/vanaspati is levied at a concessional rate.
3. Import duty on certain crude vegetable oils of edible grade has been kept low as compared to refined oils to facilitate raw material availability.
4. Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) is in place to augment the production and productivity of oilseeds.
5. In order to encourage production of solvent extracted oils in the country and to promote export of extractions, excise duty on food grade hexane has been reduced from 32% to 16%.
6. Duty-free import of vanaspati from Nepal under India-Nepal Treaty of Trade has been restricted to one lakh metric tones per year

and this import is done through the State Trading Corporation of India (STC) and distributed all over India to minimize its impact in any particular region.

7. Duty-free import of vanaspati including bakery shortening and margarine from Sri Lanka has been restricted to 2.5 lakh metric tones per year.

8. Edible oils including vanaspati have been kept in the Negative List (Sensitive List) of India under the Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) which has become operational from 1.7.2006. It has also been decided to keep these items in the negative list of prospective free trade agreements or similar agreements.

9. Sick industrial units are allowed to register with the BIFR for rehabilitation.

Jobs to be created in SEZs

3684. SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment of the total number of jobs that would be created in the SEZs sanctioned by Government, has been made so far;

(b) what would be the expected revenue loss to the exchequer, as units located in these SEZs would be exempt from taxes; and

(c) whether Government are thinking about some policy, whereby land allotted for SEZs would be linked to employment generation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) At present, the Special Economic Zones established prior to the Special Economic Zones Act, 2005 are providing direct employment to over 1.84 lakh persons. The 101 SEZs notified under the SEZ Act, 2005 have so far provided direct employment to about 32,578 persons. It is expected that these 101 SEZs when fully implemented, would provide about 15.47 lakhs jobs.

(b) The quantum of exemptions and incentives to the units is dependent on the investments and the export profits which cannot be estimated at